and she, oblivious of the fact that all her eggs had gone, proceeded to rotate round and round, smoothing the sand, as she thought, over her eggs.

When the hole was quite filled up, she started off back to the sea with the same laborious slow process, with frequent pauses and gulpings for breath.

As soon as she entered the water, her speed increased, and it was as much as one could do to keep pace with her wading quite fast. She went straight out through quite heavy surf until she was no longer visible.

The whole proceeding took about two hours from when she emerged from the sea to when she returned to it.

Forbes Street,
Bombay. J. B. GREAVES.
March 15, 1934.

XIX.—THE LARVA OF THE LOBSTER MOTH (*STAUROPUS DENTILINEA* HAMPSON).

(*With a plate*).

Of all known larvae, surely that of *Stauropus* or the Lobster Moth is the most bizarre. The moth is more commonly come across than the larva but neither are common; the latter from its cryptic colouring and stance is most difficult to see even to the trained eye and because few collectors have had the good fortune to come across it, the following short note will be of interest.

Stauropus fagi Linn., the genotype is found throughout Europe and England and was considered a prize even in my young days. Five species have been described from within Indian limits of which three are confined to the Himalayas, one to the Nilgiris and a fifth to a much wider area extending from Assam to Burma, Ceylon and Java. The latter probably includes several distinct races. The larvae of the genotype, of *Stauropus alternus* and *sikkimensis* alone are known, that of *dentilinea* hitherto being unknown.

The latter closely resembles that of the genotype and of *S. alternus* in its colouring, there is however only a single subdorsal oblique stripe which is of pure dazzling white and confined to the 6th somite. Laterally two pale purplish white arches are found, one extending from the 4th to the 7th somite and the other confined to the 9th and 10th somites. The ground colouring is of a rich mahoghany tint with diffuse brighter ferruginous patches on the sides. There is also a dark brownish streak on each side of the head. Paired dorsal processes are found on the 4th to the 9th somites instead of on only the 6th to 8th, and there are also two unpaired processes on the terminal somite. The sides of the latter are expanded broadly and the preceding somite has three fleshy spines on each side. The legs show the same extraordinary development characteristic of the genotype (Fig. e) and are minutely spined throughout. Hampson states that the anal prolegs are

absent but this is an error, as the two angular processes attached to the anal somite, are in reality extraordinarily developed prolegs, as in the case of the 2nd and 3rd pairs of true legs. In some specimens these are absent having been lost from autotomy or eaten off by other larvae, a not uncommon accident when several larvae are kept together in captivity. When at rest, the larva rests on its prolegs which are stretched out like a suspension bridge, the head and anterior somites being curved strongly over the dorsum of the insect so as to meet the expanded anal somite which is also held strongly curved forwards over the dorsum. The anal prolegs are held in close apposition except when the insect is moving or feeding when they diverge strongly, apparently to allow of the free passage of frass from the anal orifice situated just above them. During rest the tarsi are constantly flexed and extended, a peculiar action which strongly reminded the writer of the action of cilia in a vorticella. The purport of this action was not at all clear. When at rest also the true legs are held straight out in front very like a praying-mantis, the 2nd and 3rd pairs of tibiae being closely apposed to the femora. As a rule the larvae pose on the edge of a leaf and look for all the world like a piece of dried crumbled or curled leaf. It was interesting to note that dried broken leaf on the food plant was of exactly the same bright mahoghany colour, so that the detection of the larvae was extremely difficult. When moving, the head is held well back, flexed over the dorsum of the anterior segment except when actually feeding, and the terminal somite is invariably carried aloft. In spite of its remarkably cryptic appearance, this larva falls a frequent victim to parasitic flies and few specimens can be obtained which are not victims to these unwelcome insects. The figures shown were drawn from specimens obtained in Coimbatore during December and the type larva has been sent to the Society's collections.

COIMBATORE. F. C. FRASER, I.M.S.,
January 6, 1934. *Lt.-Col.*

EXPLANATION OF FIGURES.

a. Side view of larva of *Stauropus dentilinea* Hamp. (The Lobster Moth) in defensive or resting attitude.
b. The same larva moving actively.
c. Terminal somites viewed from above.
d. Anal proleg greatly magnified.
e. First and second legs. (The third pair are rather shorter than the second.)

XX.—THE FLEE-BEETLE *HALTICA CYANEA* WEBER FEEDING ON THE LEAVES OF THE WATER-CHESTNUT (*TRAPA BISPINOSA* ROXB.).

While botanising near Panvel on the 25th February this year I noticed large numbers of the Chrysomelid beetle *Haltica cyanea* feeding on the leaves of the Water-chestnut (*Trapa bispinosa*). The